

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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TWO DREAMS.

An old farmhouse with meadows wide,
And sweet with clover on each side;
A bright-eyed boy, who looks from out
The door, with woodbine wreathed about,
And wishes this one thought all day:—
"Oh, if I could but fly away
From this dull place, the world to see,—
How happy, happy, happy,—
How happy I should be!"

Amid the city's constant din,
A man who round the world has been,
Amid the tumult and the throng
Is thinking,—thinking, all day long:—
"Oh, if I could but tread once more
The field-path to the farmhouse door,—
The old, brown meadows could I see,—
How happy, happy, happy,—
How happy I should be!"

—*Marian Douglas.*

STRENGTH OF CHARACTER THE STRENGTH OF THE WEAKEST PART.

"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet
offend in one point, he is guilty of all."—*St.*
JAMES ii. 10.

At first sight, this is rather a dark saying. It would seem hard measure that the breaking of one law shall involve a man in the guilt of all. Are there, then, no differences in kind or in degree among the varieties of human transgression? Is the man who has fallen into a bad habit of swearing as wicked as one who robs a savings-bank or commits a murder? Is he who covets his neighbor's goods to be held guilty before God of having taken them, and to be called to account for breaking all the law, when perhaps he has kept every commandment but the last?

I remember that is just the way I used to puzzle over this, in the days when I first began really to study these old Bible principles of life. And I had a feeling that it could not mean exactly that. Surely James never meant that all sins are absolutely equal, and that any one sin is equal to all.

I will tell you what it was that got me out of my perplexity and made what had been a rather dark and dead word into a very bright and helpful one. It was the recollection of that great principle of engineering that "the strength of a thing is the strength of its weakest part." A rope, for instance; if in one place two of the strands are broken, that rope is only as strong as the one left. Or a chain; if it has one poor link in it, what that link will hold is the measure of the chain's holding power. And so in larger, wider things; a bridge with one pier shaky, or a fortress with one approach undefended. Suppose a general should say of the fort entrusted to him to hold, "It is true there is one point which I have not protected, but only see how impregnable we are everywhere else!" What sort of resistance would he be likely to offer? And what sort of defence would it be, to the courtmartial which would try him for

unfaithfulness to his trust, if he should gravely urge that it was only a tenth of the whole circuit in his charge that he had neglected, and that therefore he ought not to be treated as guilty of losing the whole, but only of that tenth of it?

Now do you not see how this mechanical principle rounds in from mere material things, into a parable of human character? The strength of a man's character is the strength of its weakest part. That is how you get the meaning of James's word about a man breaking the law at one place being guilty of all. If a man cannot stand the strain of life at one point, it is of no use for him to plead that if he had not been taken just there, he would not have given way. If he allow sin to enter his life at one place, he has betrayed his trust, he has surrendered his character, no matter though in a score of other matters he is so strong as not even to feel temptation.

What a wonderful thing it is, that we call a man's character! It is something absolutely intangible, and yet the deepest, most real thing in man. And notice this curious *wholeness* in it; though it is made up of such varied elements, it is one thing, not a number of separate things; it all holds together like the strands of a rope. It is character that has to bear the strain of life. It is this invisible thing—what you *are*—which has to bear the pressure of toil and weariness and sorrow, to stand upright in the storm, to keep from being drifted away by the currents of pleasure or going all to pieces (so to speak) in the explosion of passion. Yes, I think that is the grandest reality in man's nature which can do all this.

Now, again, think how all that burden and strain come upon character. Is it not like a sort of pressure coming upon the whole thing, and finding out just the weakest spot in us, exactly as the tension of a great weight tries a chain of many links and finds out the weak one? Does not the wear and tear of life find it out? The working of God's laws in the moral world is just as exact as in the physical realm. Temptation does not press on all at the same place. The measure of us is, how we resist just where we do feel the pressure. You, my dear lady, are not tempted to kill anybody, but you are tempted perhaps to be frivolous or ill-tempered or proud. Then the measure of your character is not how far you keep the commandment against murder, but how

well you resist the temptation to scold, or to fritter life away in elegant trifling. So you, my respectable brother, are not tempted to become a burglar or a pick-pocket; what you are tempted to is to sail a little too close to the wind on the matter of business honesty.

Now do you not see why Saint James speaks so strongly against those who wanted to persuade themselves that they were righteous enough if they kept nine Commandments out of ten? It would be a pretty easy-going world, if each of us could choose his own one favorite sin, and be allowed that, as it were, as a sort of discount off the moral reckoning!

The strength of a character is the strength of its weakest part. Look around you, and every day you find illustrations of it,—how one little flaw, even where there is no absolute breaking down, does vitiate the whole. Have you never seen an otherwise fair, strong life broken down by the one weakness of intemperance? Many a life has broken down in the ever intenser commercial strain of our time, when sudden, extra temptation came upon one little weakness in honesty. There was a weak spot somewhere; they broke down and dragged down,—oh, how many, in their ruin.

But do we mean that one sin or weakness makes the whole life worthless, nullifies all else that we may try to do or be?

One *permitted* sin; one weakness yielded to rather than resisted,—that is the fatal thing. The lesson is,—not to make us hopeless or despairing; it is against that subtle habit of excusing ourselves for some sin which we are not really struggling against, by dwelling on other points about us that are good. A man is intemperate. "Well," he says, "at any rate I'm not a thief. I wouldn't cheat any one out of a penny." Or he is passionate. "Yes," he says, "I know I am irritable, but then, I pay my debts, and that is more than some folks can say." Or he is a man of unclean life. "Anyhow," he says, "I am not a hypocrite; I don't make any professions"; and he fancies that his vice is made not quite so bad by the fact that he does not try even to seem good! . . . And so they go their way, think they are tolerably decent people on the average,—and they let the weak spots remain!

Oh, friends, let us deal with this wonderful thing, our life, as wisely as we do with machines that we use! We put their valuation by their weakest place.

Deal with your life, which is immortal, at least as faithfully as with these things which are for only a few short years. All that the mechanical parallel has in it is the guarding against evil, the close self-scrutiny to find life's hidden flaws and weaknesses. But that is not the whole of life. Life, true life, is not only guarding against sin, but growth in good. Guarding against sin,—that is "the Law"; and it has to be. But the larger life comes by the Gospel,—by looking towards God in thankful piety, towards men in helpful sympathy; by the strong doing of life's common work; by the hearty throwing of ourselves into the struggle for the world's good; by loyal admiration of all that is noblest in thought and life; most of all, by loyal discipleship to Christ, the Life that is the Light of men.—*Brooke Herford.*

THE STILL HOUR.

O Lord, I pray
That for this day
I may not swerve,
By foot or hand,
From thy command,
Not to be served, but serve.

This, too, I pray—
That for this day
No love of ease
Nor pride prevent
My good intent,
Not to be pleased, but please.

And, if I may,
I'd have this day
Strength from above,
So set my heart
In heavenly art,
Not to be loved, but love.

—*M. D. Babcock.*

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report,—if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, *think on these things.*—*Peter to the people of Philippi.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass., Tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

The following books are offered by Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy 69, Mass.: "Boy Scouts' Signal Sender," Fletcher; "Strange Hunt for the Beaver Patrol"; "The Boy Scouts' Victory"; "Tom Peck's Courage"; "Boy Scouts' Defiance"; "Boy Scouts on the Trail," Maitland; "Boy Scouts to the Rescue"; "Boy Scouts in Camp"; "Wood Folk at School," W. J. Long; "Aunt Margaret's Visit," G. M. Sterne.

REQUESTS.

1. Mrs. H. J. Robards, 31 West Front Street, Oxford, North Carolina, will be glad of *Priscilla* or *Needlecraft*.

2. I am the only girl my father has. I am fourteen years old. I should like to have a correspondent. I should like to get the *Ladies' Home Journal* and the book of William Green Hill, and any other good reading you care to send, as I enjoy reading so well. As this is my first letter I hope it will be printed. (Miss) Hallie Kate Hawkins, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina.

3. We live on a farm. I have a husband and six little children, the oldest a boy of twelve. He is a cripple. I should be glad to get any kind of books and papers, also cards and picture-books for the children. Mrs. John Hamons, Duncan, Oklahoma, Route 1.

4. "The Shepherd of the Hills," "Prairie Bird," and "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine" will be greatly appreciated by Janie Nolen, Martinsville, Virginia.

5. I am a girl fourteen years old. I live in a small country village and should like to become a member of the Book Club and receive some books and magazines. I should especially like a Bible; also any scraps for patchwork will be appreciated. For reference I send the name of Rev. C. V. Steininger, Sandidges, Virginia. Louise T. Coffey, Alto, Virginia.

6. I am writing this to ask for any kind of good, religious reading matter. I am a widow with seven small children, the oldest fifteen, the youngest nearly three years old. My husband has been dead two years. We live in a mountainous country on a small farm. All my children are girls except two little boys aged nine and five. I am a member of the Methodist church. I lost my health over a year ago by the influenza. I should be so thankful for a Bible, as the only one I have is very small and much worn. I should also be thankful for any quilt pieces for my little girls. Mrs. Lily Cox, Dodson, Virginia.

7. Miss Mattie Sale, Ronda, North Carolina, R. F. D. 2, will appreciate getting last year's and this year's "Normal Instructor" and "Primary Plans" from some one who would like to pass them on. She would like to have Rapier's "Teaching the Fundamentals" and Lieper's "Language Work" for Teachers' Reading Circle course. She will highly appreciate a supplement to a library for the first, second, and third grades. The rural library where she teaches has no books for the grades.

8. Will you please publish a request for me for the Poetical Works of Edgar Allan Poe; also the Poetical Works of Thomas Campbell; and "The Age of Fable"? I need these books for my own use and for the young people of my community. Rev. D. J. Bryant, Floyd, Virginia.

9. My post-office address is now Bassett, Virginia. I wish to thank all who have sent me reading matter since January; my mother-in-law received it and she appreciated it, as she is old and not able to work. All who wish to send me any more may please address it to Bassett, Virginia. Mrs. C. W. Foley.

10. Will you please mention in *The Cheerful Letter* that we thank every one who has sent us reading and shall appreciate anything they may send in the future? We of this neighborhood are planning to have a Community Fair this year, and I shall be pleased to receive some magazines with crochet designs. I have been an invalid this past winter, but am better and able to get out again. Mrs. Eva Collins, Blakely, Georgia, Route 1.

11. Mrs. G. Lee Roberson, Elamsville, Virginia, Box 22, sends words of appreciation to those who have remembered her in

the past. She could not write to all of them. She would like some pieces of any kind for a quilt and some good novels. Anything sent will surely be appreciated.

12. Mrs. H. W. Little, Marshville, North Carolina, Route 4, will be glad of any reading.

13. Mrs. Connie Whitley, Albemarle, North Carolina, Route 4, Box 189, mother of eight children, living in the country and working on a farm, will be glad of cards and light reading.

14. Any help in the deaf and dumb language will be most welcome to Mrs. D. P. Morrell, Bonney Beg Lake, North Berwick, Maine.

15. This is my first letter to the Cheerful Letter Club. I live in the lonely mountains. I should be glad of some reading. I have four children, two girls and two boys, aged from four to fourteen years. My husband and myself belong to the Missionary church. My husband is a minister. He would be so glad of a Bible. I should much appreciate a few quilt pieces and bits of ribbon for my little girls. For reference I give Rev. Andy Harman, Mannering, West Virginia. Address Mrs. R. S. Whittington, Ashland, West Virginia.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Miss Ellen Hanson, formerly Pleasant View, Virginia, is now at De Young, Pennsylvania, and would like reading at her new home.

Mrs. H. G. Burch has moved from Pleasant View to 952 Cabbell Street, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Mrs. Jessie F. Mosley has gone from Shorum to Delaplaine, Arkansas, Route 1, Box 91.

Mrs. K. McInnis has moved from Rogers, Arkansas, and left no address.

Mrs. C. W. Foley is now living at Bassett, Virginia.

NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT.

At the close of the season of 1919-20, to the loyal workers of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, the backward glance must be most encouraging and satisfactory.

At our meetings the cordial greetings among members, the problems discussed, the experiences related, and the suggestions offered, all tend to make each one more anxious to redouble her efforts.

The friendly letters containing reports of these meetings, sent to distant chairmen, have served to unite into one body all the branches of our National Alliance and have brought them into closer touch. That this plan has proved most helpful to those who have sent as well as to those who have received is shown by appreciative replies which, in all instances, have come back to us.

The very efficient work done by Miss Helen Wells, Chairman of the Libraries, has been deeply appreciated. During the year eleven new libraries have been placed and seven transferred; ninety-seven letters have been written. The Travelling Library Catalogue has been revised, with the result that there are now ninety libraries on the list.

Miss Wells's resignation has been accepted with sincere regret, and Mrs. Harry A. Stevens of Wollaston will be her successor.

The vacancy caused by Mrs. Elmer E. Hudson's resignation from the Home Study Department has not yet been filled. The numerous appeals for instruction in various studies make very apparent the importance of this work and the urgent need of volunteer teachers.

The Bible Chairman, Mrs. Hallett, reports a gift of six Bibles from the Massachusetts Bible Society. Numerous requests have been received; but owing to the small number of responses to the many appeals for Bibles with large print, the Chairman has been able to send only a few.

Cheerful Letter Branches have filled other requests. Another year can we not make a "drive" for large-print Bibles, and so promptly answer more appeals?

Most inspiring is the story of Mrs. Rachel Sands's work, and the astonishing amount of cheer she is giving by her letters and scrapbooks. Briefly told, it runs thus:—

Always interested in people and anxious to find some helpful work which would not interfere with her home duties too much, she chanced about a year ago to read an account in a Beverly local paper of Mrs. Nichols's talk on Cheerful Letter work at the Alliance. This account sounded so good, she subscribed for the paper, and letters were sent to several people whose names were found in the list under "Requests." Their replies showed that here was the desired oppor-

tunity. The Burgess Bedtime Stories in the Boston *Herald* having been greatly enjoyed by her children, Mrs. Sands conceived the idea of making children's scrapbooks. These were so well received that soon the demand was greater than the supply. The pressing need of more clippings was mentioned at the Cheerful Letter Conference, with the result that numerous packages of stories cut from newspapers, and pictures of all kinds, were sent, thus enabling her to extend her work. Besides the great number of scrapbooks which are constantly carrying happiness into many homes and hospitals, some really beautiful ones have gone to circulating and parish libraries.

Mrs. Sands writes of her work: "I consider my correspondence as important as my scrapbooks, for there are all kinds of letters, and by them I get to know people and their needs. To one woman who has always wanted to travel and who is a great admirer of President Wilson, will be sent the *Herald* Section with its pictures of the proposed summer White House; and to an old lady who living far from the ocean has always longed to see it, a package of ocean views."

Some people find life such a struggle, there is no strength or inclination for reading. Others are just lonely, and a bright, newsy letter helps more than anything. There are well-educated women whose lots are cast in lonely places, and they enjoy exchanging thoughts on history, current events, etc. Any person who wishes to help others can find a rich opportunity in this work. If we cannot go forth and do big things, here is something that can be done at home. If we do many little things, they will surely count towards one big thing.

Nor does Mrs. Sands's work stop here, for her enthusiasm has aroused a like interest in a sister who has lately lost her husband and who about three months ago began to make scrapbooks of old postcards and pictures,—her two children helping by pasting. She already has forty names taken from the paper, to whom she sends letters regularly. Her boy twelve years old writes to two children, and her girl aged nine years has four little correspondents, for this is a work in which children can be real helpers. This sister, a Baptist, feels her minister knows much about Cheerful Letter work, for he and his congregation are doing their bit in aiding her.

At present there are 182 Cheerful Letter Branches in twenty States. Massachusetts claims 127 including the nine new ones formed this year.

To give an accurate statement in figures of the tremendous amount of faithful, loving work done all over the country would be an impossibility. Some reports are very inadequate, as a number of chairmen prefer to spend what time they have for the work in doing up packages rather than in counting and recording the exact number of articles sent.

Men, women, and children, schools, hospitals, and camps, have been made happier by thousands of letters, postals of all kinds, cards, pictures, and *Register* clippings. Over seven thousand post-cards from three branches alone have found their way to Dr. Fernald's School for the Feeble-Minded at Waverley, Mass.

The number of books, magazines, and papers sent is almost unbelievable.

From the Needham Branch, with its increased activities, comes the largest report, approximating two thousand items.

Magazines have brightened the hours of a young woman tending the crossing in Cohasset. To a girl in Athens, Texas, have been sent five American flags to be used in a flag drill.

Reports from far and near mention boxes, bundles, packages, and even *pounds* of scrap-pieces given out—an amazing quantity—besides the three thousand pieces taken charge of and assigned by Mrs. H. T. Hodgdon.

Two collections for distribution contained patches partially sewed together, with sufficient material to finish two entire quilts for a girls' school in Pine Mountain, Kentucky. Some mothers write they have no cloth to piece the worn-out tops of their quilts or even to mend their children's clothes.

At Christmas the distributing centres had reason to thank many branches for gifts which carried a fourfold blessing,—ours in giving, theirs in receiving, then passing on again, and finally the happiness of the recipients. Also at this time the inmates of three City Homes were visited and cheered by presents of fruit, candy, money, and cards.

Letters and often little remembrances from correspondents show how sincere is their gratitude for all favors received. The following are convincing testimonials:—

From a woman not over-strong, living

in North Carolina: "Rose at 1 A.M., got through breakfast and helped husband off to town with a load of cotton; did the morning's housework; milked; prepared dinner and supper, and got to shucking corn at 6 A.M., at which I worked till 11.30 and now I am writing to you until the children come in asking for dinner."

From a young lady ill with tuberculosis in New Mexico: "Every time I look at the pictures which you sent, I thank my Heavenly Father for giving me such a friend."

From Mr. Andrew Stott, Toledo, Washington, whose name came in answer to our advertisement in the *Western Farmer*, Portland, Oregon, and to whom books have been sent: "What can I do for you in return?"

Very gratifying is the report from Hubbardston, Mass., on account of the spirit of love and appreciation evidenced toward their one correspondent, Mrs. Katie B. of North Carolina. To quote from the Chairman's letter: "I can't begin to tell you how we enjoy our Katie. Our interest in her and her family is very deep and real, and her letters are received with the greatest sense of satisfaction and sisterly sympathy that you can imagine. Every month a bundle of magazines and papers is sent to her and she is remembered with many books."

Winchendon, Mass., has a list of seventeen people who are cared for by a deaf lady,—so deaf she can hear nothing, being obliged to use paper and pencil when one wishes to talk with her. When we feel discouraged, let us recall to mind this good lady and her life of service in spite of a great infirmity.

The crowning achievement of the year has been the marvellous success of the Sunshine Bags. Fully determined to do our part in paying for the increased cost of printing the *Cheerful Letter* paper, these little bags with their explanatory rhyme were again sent forth, not only to Massachusetts branches, as was the plan last year, but (properly endorsed by the Executive Board) to all branches of the Alliance. Most sincere thanks are due to all these branches for their hearty co-operation and generous response, and especially to Miss Edith Jones, who, as Treasurer, has with untiring patience received and deposited the contributions in the Home Savings Bank. Our highest expectations were more than realized when the amount raised was found to be

\$321.62, which after paying the deficit leaves us the proud owners of a goodly sum for future use.

The following incident will show how contagious was the spirit of loving service which the little bags called forth: In Cleveland, Ohio, a small boy six and a half years old who had always been interested in watching his mother do up her packages to send off, saw her counting her Sunshine money one night as he was going to bed. On being told it was to print the *Cheerful Letter* paper which helped poor people get magazines, he took a nickel from his pocket, saying, "I want to put this in too, mamma, and don't you give it back to me, either." Then he danced around the room, singing, "Oh, I am so happy, I helped the poor; oh, I am so happy!"

The subscription list of the paper has also increased. Over fourteen hundred copies were sent out last month. Cambridge is the banner branch in reporting thirty-five subscriptions. One branch that has no *Cheerful Letter* committee has sent ten dollars for this.

In many instances the paper is sent directly to people unable to pay for it. To them it is a source of uplift and inspiration, and in their homes it would be greatly missed.

At the close of our year's activities it was most fitting that the suggestion of our Chairman should be carried out and that book ends should be placed in the Fifield Memorial Room, in loving remembrance of Mrs. Emily A. Fifield, who endeared herself to all Alliance women by her years of devoted service, and who was always most appreciative of *Cheerful Letter* work.

With the memory of such loyal workers ever with us, let us press forward with renewed consecration and courage. Our work with its many channels of usefulness should appeal to every one, young and old.

May we realize its great possibilities to the fullest extent during the coming year.

MRS. FRANCES HASTINGS, *Secretary*.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS.

Every mother of children has to be a teacher. Many mothers might profit by certain suggestions given to Sunday-school workers in a little book called "The

Teacher Who Teaches," by Amos R. Wells. The author has a good deal to say about the importance of putting the right kinds of questions to children: "A question," he says, "is a direct challenge to thought. It is to the mind what the cultivator is to the field,—it lets in the air, the sunshine, and the rain." If one is trying to get a boy or girl to do real thinking, it makes a good deal of difference how questions are put. Those which require a simple Yes or No for an answer are the least helpful; to continue the simile of the cultivator,—those questions barely scratch the surface of the mind.

Suppose mother is looking over a map in the school geography with ten-year-old Joe. Maybe she remarks: "Rivers are great helps to business, aren't they? Do you notice how often the important cities are located on river-banks?" And Joe may say "Yes," without thinking or caring much about it. If she puts her question in such form as to suggest a fascinating puzzle, something for him to find out, she sets his own mind to work. "Just see, Joe,—so many important towns in the Atlantic Coast States are built beside rivers; how do you suppose that happened?" If he can think out for himself the advantage of a location where watercraft can bring freight and carry away freight, he has a part of the answer, for he sees that a river may be a sort of ready-made road. And if he knows anything about the way falling water furnishes power for running machinery, he will reach another part of the answer, seeing that nature invites men to build factories in such places. Questions like that help transform the dull diagram of a printed map into a fascinating story about some portion of the country.

Suppose mother finds Josephine studying a Sunday-school lesson, and learning the Fourth Commandment. If she offers the ready-made information, "You see, that requires us to work six days as well as to rest one day," all that remains for Josephine to say is "Yes, I suppose so." But a well-put question may give Josephine a valuable chance to do direct thinking. Mother might say, "Does the Fourth Commandment have anything to do with our Tuesdays and Thursdays?" The daughter may search the Scriptures on her own account, and make the surprising discovery that this particular ordinance does have to do with all seven days of the week, and not just with one particular day!

Every mother needs to be a teacher. And the old saying, that teachers are born and not made, is far from true. Many of the best teachers have made themselves such, by caring a great deal to help children to grow, and by persistently studying and practising the best ways of awakening young minds to think for themselves.

THE FARM SPRING.

The water of all springs comes from the great ground-water body that everywhere, at greater or less depths, underlies the surface of the earth. Most waters come from comparatively superficial sources, but many rise from deeper reservoirs, perhaps hundreds of feet down in the rocks. The rain falling on the surface and absorbed by the soils and rocks is, generally speaking, the original source of all the water.

Rain, as it falls on the surface, is essentially pure, but as it percolates downward through the soil or rock on its way to feed the springs it dissolves something from each of the minerals that it touches. The feldspars furnish the alkali that gives the objectionable yellowness to light vegetables cooked in the water; other minerals furnish the iron that stains the laundry; still others, especially limestones, cause the "hardness" that makes many waters so unsatisfactory for washing.

Natural spring waters are rarely dangerous to health, for the substances held in solution are generally harmless. A few waters, it is true, have properties that adapt them to medicinal rather than to drinking purposes, and others, although harmless, are objectionable in taste or odor.

There is no infallible way to detect pollution in small quantities. A common-sense inspection of the surroundings will usually show whether or not there is any possible source of contamination in the vicinity. If one is found, it should be removed immediately or the use of the spring should be discontinued.

A spring in soft ground, if the water is to be used for drinking, should be curbed with stone, brick or cement—not with wood. The top of the curbing should be at a height sufficient to prevent the entrance of surface wash. Over the whole should be placed a water-tight cover to prevent pollution from above. There should be no crack or opening in the

curbing or between it and the covering through which toads, mice or other small animals could enter. An opening left for the escape of water, or for other purposes should be covered with wire netting. Stock should be fenced off from the vicinity of the spring.

A spring thus protected is generally safe from all pollution except that which reaches it by seepage. Usually such pollution is likely to occur only when there are dwellings or barns on the slopes above the spring. Even then, owing to the process of purification that the water undergoes in filtering through the earth the danger is greatly lessened if the spring is one hundred and fifty feet or more from the source of contamination.

Rock waters, except those from limestones, are commonly safe if they are not beneath cities or towns. In such neighborhoods polluting matter is sometimes carried downward through cracks or fissures into springs on lower ground. In limestones the waters follow open underground channels, often miles in length, in which there is no opportunity for filtration; and if, as often happens, polluting matter finds entrance through sink holes or otherwise, disease may be transmitted for long distances.

Springs in a limestone formation should, therefore, be carefully watched. Muddiness or floating matter rising with the water after rains is often an indication of connection with sink holes. If the sink holes are in cultivated or pasture lands, the safest course is to discontinue the use of the water.

If protected as is here suggested, spring water is an ideal source of farm supply, especially if it can be piped to the house. Often the waters of the larger springs can be forced into the buildings by rams or windmills if they will not flow by gravity.—*The Youth's Companion*.

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

WILLIAM TELL, DELIVERER OF SWITZERLAND.

Most of us were born and bred in a republic,—a land where every intelligent citizen has some voice in the management of public affairs; where the cost of public needs and conveniences is met by taxes which each property-holder or wage-earner pays according to his ability. We can

hardly imagine what it would be like to live in a land where one man practically owned everything, and might, at any moment, seize as much as he chose of anybody's belongings. Yet under such abominably unfair conditions most of the people of Europe used to live.

Seven hundred years ago that was precisely the situation of the farmers and village people in the beautiful lake region of Central Switzerland. An Austrian emperor, Albert of Hapsburg, wanted more money for personal use, and decided to take that particular region as a desirable addition to his private estates. That meant the farmers' becoming his servants,—almost his slaves,—obliged to hand over to him whatever he might demand of the products of their own industry and good management. They objected. Albert sent special agents or "governors" to force them into prompt obedience.

One of these agents took possession of the live-stock used on a little farm. The owner protested: How could he cultivate the fields without his oxen? "Drag the plough yourself, clumsy fool," was all the comfort he got. Another farmer, whose son resisted the taking away of valuable animals, was punished by having his eyes put out! A specially hateful governor named Gessler one day chanced to come upon an unusually comfortable, well-kept home, and demanded of the master of the house: "How do you people dare complain of the emperor's taxes, while he permits you to have such homes as this? He proposes to teach you to be less impudent." And then the governor's followers proceeded to destroy the whole establishment, by way of teaching the owner and his neighbors proper humility.

Gessler had still another ingenious idea of the way to teach respect for authority. Of course everybody had to bow very humbly whenever he, the imperial governor, passed by. But that was not enough. In the village market-place at Altdorf, Gessler had his men set up a tall pole like a flagstaff, and hang upon it one of his hats. Then he issued orders that everybody who passed through the market-place should salute that hat with the same respectful action that would be offered if he were there in person. His very hat was to receive bows and courtesies in his absence!

This silly order naturally disgusted and angered the people, but it was difficult to make any stand against it. Every omis-

sion of the required salute was noticed and reported and punished. The situation grew worse and worse.

Some of the best men in the district said privately to each other that such things should not go on. No one man alone could successfully resist the powerful imposition, but a considerable number of men, agreeing together and working together, might overthrow the tyranny and set the people free. They held several secret meetings and laid plans for a general uprising.

Before the time set for the revolution one determined man took such a stand as to begin the conflict on his own account. William Tell, a young farmer and woodsman, one day boldly refused to bow to Gessler's old hat in Altdorf market-place. He was arrested and dragged before Gessler for discipline. And Gessler invented the meanest penalty he could think up. In those days huntsmen used bows and arrows to kill wild fowl, deer, or wolves; it was before the invention of modern firearms. Tell was famous for his skill as an archer.

"We'll see what this huntsman can do with a good sharp arrow," said Gessler. He ordered his men to go get Tell's little son, a boy five or six years old, and to place him at a certain distant spot, with an apple balanced on his head. Then Tell was given one chance to save his own life: he might take a shot at that apple with his bow and arrow. Gessler's idea, of course, was to make the young father either kill or horribly wound his own boy. The arrangement was purposely such that there seemed not one chance in thousands of striking the apple and yet missing the child.

A crowd gathered to look on. Gessler's followers jeered at the archer. They were sure he would simply be the death of his own boy, and they hoped it would be so. The patriot neighbors hoped and prayed that their friend's eagle eyesight and steady nerves might be equal to the horrible test.

Ready.....!

The arrow flew straight to its mark. The apple fell to the ground, split in two by the flying point. Not a hair of the child was hurt.

"But you have a second arrow there," observed the sneering Gessler. "Did you, then, imagine that you might be allowed a second attempt if you failed the first time?"

"No," said Tell; "if I had failed, that second arrow was for *you*!"

Naturally enough, that retort enraged the defeated governor. Instead of carrying out his agreement to set Tell free, Gessler placed him again under arrest, and told the guards to take him to a prison castle at the other side of Lake Lucerne. Gessler himself joined the party, and they set off in a rowboat. It looked as if there were no more chance for Tell.

But this was in a mountain land, where high winds often begin to blow with hardly a moment's warning. Such winds are trying enough for travellers over the rough mountain trails, but they mean positive, desperate danger to travellers on the deep waters of a mountain lake, walled in by ragged rocks.

One of those sudden squalls struck Lake Lucerne while Tell, his arms securely bound, was being carried across in the boat, a helpless prisoner. The rowers did their best; the steersman did his best; but the boat was soon beyond all control, pitching and tossing and rolling about at the mercy of the plunging waves. At last somebody suggested that perhaps Tell himself might be able to handle the boat and get them all to a place of safety. He was the ideal backwoodsman, able to do all the kinds of things that Boy Scouts learn,—strong, quick-witted, skilful at every kind of bodily exercise. "Well, let it be so," agreed Gessler, grudgingly. "Untie the fellow's arms and let him try."

Tell knew every rod of the lake-shore. He needed no warning against the steep cliffs rising at one place straight up out of the foam and spray of the breaking waves. He knew without being told just where sunken ledges were waiting unseen, like hidden claws, ready to seize and crush any structure of wood that came within their reach. He also knew well the very few spots where a boat might with some chance of safety approach the shore. The problem was to get the tossing boat anywhere near to a special, desired part of the shore while winds and waves were fighting against it. Toward one such spot he did after a time manage to steer the boat. Nearing the wooded shore, he stood up, made one mighty, tremendous leap—and reached the land.

The boat itself was all but overturned by the sudden shock of his move, but it did right itself. In another instant the tossing waters swept it again far out from the shore, with its occupants as

helpless as they had been at the first, and furious now into the bargain.

But Tell was safe!

The patriot friends were roused to action. A few encounters convinced the Austrians that the men of the Forest Cantons were not to be handled in Gessler's brutal fashion. And that day's adventure of William Tell proved to be the beginning of a movement which led in time to Switzerland's establishment as a free and independent nation.

POPULAR SCIENCE.

AËRO MAPS.

By the use of old methods of map-making, it is said that it would take at least two hundred years to map out the great areas of the earth still unexplored. But nowadays, instead of climbing high mountains and measuring land foot by foot, a map-maker may do his work while flying at the rate of a hundred miles an hour. A specially designed camera is fastened to the bottom of an airplane, and photographs are clicked off automatically, so many to the minute. The photographs so taken are fitted together into what is called a mosaic map, which shows every city, town, river, road, and tree over which the recording camera has flown. The aëro map is an invention of the war.—*The Christian Register*.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 1925 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge 40, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly. (not necessarily for publication) and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

MAGAZINE GAME.

1. A dispenser of justice.
2. A prospector.
3. What we all cling to.
4. A planet and its labor.
5. A citizen of the world.

—Selected.

II.

PUZZLE.

My first is in error.

My second's a commander.

My whole is quite often occasioned by slander.

—*Harper's Young People.*

III.

NATIONAL NICKNAMES.

The initials of the surnames of the noted Americans whose nicknames are here given read downward in order, spell the surname of the Teacher President:—

1. Sage of Chappaqua.
2. Old Man Eloquent.
3. Political Meteor.
4. Poor Richard.
5. Prince of American Letters.
6. Great Indian Apostle.
7. The Rail-splitter.
8. Little Giant.

—*American Boy.*

IV.

ENIGMA.

I am composed of 20 letters.

My 13, 14, 16, 15, 12, is the time of a king's rule.

My 4, 5, 3, 8, 9, is a part of the body.

—My 1, 19, 11, 4, 5, 3, 20, is one who instructs.

My 6, 7, 4, 2, is possessed of much property.

My 11, 15, 11, 18, 14, is a precious stone.

My 17, 9, 10, 6, is to keep in motion.

My whole is the name of a Unitarian paper.

—*The Beacon.*

V.

HALF SQUARE.

1. A famous statesman.
2. One of the States of the Union.
3. To excavate.
4. To walk.
5. A vowel.

VI.

SOBRIQUETS.

What States are known by the following:—

1. Creole State.
2. Land of Steady Habits.
3. Excelsior State.
4. Mother of Presidents.
5. Dark and Bloody Ground.

Answers to puzzles in the June number.

I. MAGAZINE GAME: 1. Truth. 2. Delineator. 3. Puck. 4. Atlantic. 5. Black Cat.

II. TIME FLOWERS: 1. Sweet William. 2. Morning-glory. 3. Lily of the valley. 4. Forget-me-not. 5. Dandelion. 6. Four-o'clock. 7. Bleeding-heart. 8. Tulips. 9. Golden-rod. 10. Buttercup. 11. Asters. 12. Lady's-slippers. 13. Foxglove. 14. Larkspur.

III. CROSS PUZZLES:—

C R U M B

S C O R E

A B A T E

S L A S H

S K E I N

B U Y E R

A R E N A

P O P P Y

S N U F F

S N A R L—BETSEY ROSS.

IV. CROSS-WORD ENIGMA: Isles of Shoals.

V. THE NEW HOUSE: 1. Frame. 2. Floor. 3. Roof. 4. Window. 5. Attic.

VI. WITH "US" AWAY: 1. Faust—fat. 2. Muse—me. 3. House—hoe. 4. Usage—age. 5. Usher—her. 6. Rouse—roe.

See, then, how faithfully the Lord is leading thee to true peace, who surroundeth thee with so many crosses. It is called "the peace of God which passeth all understanding,"—that is, which is not known by feeling or perception or thinking. All our thinking cannot attain nor understand it. None but those who of free will take up the cross laid on them,—these, tried and troubled in all they feel and think and understand, afterward experience this peace.—*Martin Luther.*

It is quite a mistake to fancy that religion belongs only to the highest and what are called "holy" duties of life. They are doing the work of the Lord who sweep a floor or guide a plough or sit over a desk with a desire so to do their work that God may thereby be glorified. All work done from such motives, and for such an end, becomes the work of the Lord.—*Thomas Guthrie.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

Chairman of the Cheerful Letter Exchange,
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Mrs. Francis Hastings, Kendal Green, Mass.

Editor of The Cheerful Letter, Miss L.
Freeman Clarke, 5 Brimmer Street, Boston,
Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols,
25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of *The Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

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To fill the unusual demand for copies of *The Cheerful Letter*, it will be greatly

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The music sent out by this department has in the past given much pleasure; and now that there is more and more interest in "community singing" the calls for help may naturally be expected to be greater.

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